

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector
for the Rural District of Saint Ives
in the County of Huntingdon
for the year ending 31st December, 1945.

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To the Chairman and Members of the Saint Ives
Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen,

Generally the health of the district has improved in spite of the strain of War, especially so in the case of diphtheria, which, in certain fen areas seemed to be endemic and has entirely ceased.

The provision of water supply in the villages at present depending on surface wells is well advanced, and sewerage schemes for the whole district are in preparation, while the erection of new houses is proceeding as satisfactorily as the present restrictions allow.

I am,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

W. R. GROVE,
B.A., M.D., B.Ch., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS

Medical Officer of Health;

W.R. GROVE, M.D., B.Ch., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Senior Sanitary Inspector;

G.H. PHIPPS

Additional Sanitary Inspector;

W.G. MUNDAY

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STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Population (Mid 1945)	10,780
Area	45,911 acres
Rateable Value (1st April, 1945)	£49,355
Sum represented by a Penny Rate (Net Product)	£202
Number of Inhabited Houses	3120

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the Year.

	M	F	Total	
<u>Live Births</u> (Legitimate)	79	65	144	Birth-rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population.... 15·8
(Illegitimate)	10	8	18	
<u>Still Births</u> (Legitimate)	1	1	2	(Rate per 1000 0·01
(Illegitimate)	0	0	0	
<u>Deaths</u>	72	57	129	Death-rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population12·56
<u>Deaths</u> (Infants under one year of age) (None Illegitimate)	1	2	3	

There was one death from maternal causes - not puerperal.

Death-rate of Infants under one year of age:-

All Infants per 1000 live births18·0

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	28
" " Measles (all ages)	...	0
" " Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	0
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 yrs. of age)	...	0

As a comparison

the Birth rate for England and Wales during 1945 was:-	16·1 per 1000
Death rate " " " " " " "	11·4 " "
Deaths under one year:- " " " " " "	4·6 " "

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GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

With the appointment in February of Mr. W.G. Munday as Additional Sanitary Inspector in the Department, work was commenced on the Housing Survey in the district, on the lines suggested in the Hobhouse Report.

The administration of the health services in the area remained the same during the year. The usual co-operation between the County Council and the District Council continued. It was not found necessary to utilise the services of the emergency public health facilities established in this region, as there were no unusual circumstances that arose where their help was required.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

1.(1) WATER.

The rainfall during the year was again below normal only 18.45 inches being recorded as against the previous 40 years average of 21.70. The supplies provided by the Council from the Ramsey & St. Ives, and the Chesterton & St. Ives Joint Water Boards, were not interrupted in any way during the year, and the demand for water for both domestic and agricultural purposes continues to increase. The quantity supplied to the Services naturally shows a substantial decrease.

The Chesterton & St. Ives Joint Board suggested that they would be responsible for the maintenance of adequate pressures in those parts of the district they supplied, if the Council would submit any future proposals for the laying of distribution mains to the Board for their approval.

The Council agreed to consult the Board before laying any further mains but were not prepared to give the Board the right to approve or disapprove any such proposals.

The following tables show the quantity of water consumed in those parishes supplied by the two Joint Boards:-

	<u>Ramsey & St. Ives Joint Board</u>	<u>Chesterton & St. Ives Joint Board</u>
Domestic Consumers	13,050,000 galls.	5,461,000 galls.
Industries and Farms	5,339,000 "	7,043,000 "
R.A.F. Camps	<u>12,160,000</u> "	<u>N11</u>
Total	<u>31,549,000</u> "	<u>12,504,000</u> "
Daily Average	86,433 "	34,257 "
No. of Domestic Supplies	1,358	251
No. of Industrial & Farm Supplies	321	37

The Ministry of Health approved the suggested scheme for Hilton without holding a Public Inquiry after an inspection of the Parish had been carried out by one of their Engineers.

The Council's Consulting Engineers (Messrs. Howard Humphreys & Son) were instructed to prepare working drawings and specifications with the object of inviting tenders for one scheme for the four parishes.

WILLIAM H. HARRIS: 1881-1882

WILLIAM H. HARRIS, born May 1, 1881, at New York, N. Y. He was educated at the New York University and the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his Ph.D. in 1908. He was a member of the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

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The arrangement with Huntingdon R.D.C. whereby the Council are to receive up to 39,000 gallons per day from the former for the supply to Houghton and Wyton and the two Hemingfords, was finally agreed and it is hoped that the necessary works to supply these four parishes will be commenced in 1946.

The County Council also approved the scheme for contribution under the Local Government Act, and the Rural Water Supplies Act, 1944, and offered the Council a contribution not exceeding 25% of the Capital cost of the scheme, which the Council accepted.

Samples of water from shallow wells and other private sources of supply were taken and submitted to the Public Analyst for bacteriological examination in cases where it was considered that the supplies were liable to pollution. 10 such samples were taken, 9 of which were satisfactory, the remaining supply being considered by the Analyst to be unsafe for drinking purposes.

As in this latter case there was no alternative supply available the occupier was advised to boil all water used for drinking and domestic purposes.

Although the supply of materials became increasingly difficult during the year informal action by the Department resulted in additional cottage property being connected to the Council's mains which was formerly supplied by shallow wells.

1.(2) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The Joint Committee consisting of 8 Members from both St. Ives Borough Council and St. Ives R.D.C. recommended the adoption of a combined scheme for the Borough and the parishes of Hemingford Grey, Hemingford Abbots, Fenstanton, Holywell-cum-Needlingworth and Houghton and Wyton.

Such a scheme involved the siting of a disposal works in the Rural District, probably in Holywell, to deal with the sewage which would, on account of the lack of fall, have to be pumped to the works.

The two Councils agreed to proceed with the scheme with all speed as it was considered it would be more economical to combine for this purpose and so reduce both capital and maintenance charges.

An adequate sewerage scheme is an urgent necessity in the parishes concerned, situated as they are on the banks of the Ouse, and the difficulty of disposing of the sewage from both private and Council houses in that part of the district has increased enormously in the past few years. The new water scheme for the Hemingfords and Houghton will create further difficulties until the sewerage scheme, now being prepared, is completed.

It is anticipated that as far as the Council are concerned a grant will be made towards the capital cost under the provisions of the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1946.

2. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Complaints were received during the summer of the state of the River Ouse at Hemingford and Houghton due to decaying weeds, and boating facilities were affected. The complaints were passed on to the River Great Ouse Catchment Board as the responsible authority.

No cases of industrial or sewage pollution due to circumstances arising in the district were reported.

The Council carried out maintenance and cleansing operations on a number of minor water courses, the greater part of this work being carried out by contract with the Huntingdonshire W.A.E.C. Advantage was taken of the 50% grant towards the cost of such work which is available from the Ministry of Agriculture.

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3.(1) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

The Housing Survey being carried out has shown that up to the end of the year only one house was without sufficient sanitary accommodation and a separate pail closet was provided by the owners after the service of an informal notice.

The conversion of pail closets to water closets has been carried out in 20 houses, the majority of which are occupied by the owners, such conversions are encouraged where there is sufficient land available to provide a cesspool or septic tank.

Nightsoil continued to be collected from Bluntisham-cum-Earith, Scmersham and Warboys.

Great difficulty was encountered in obtaining Contractors to carry out this type of work.

3.(2) PUBLIC CLEANSING AND SALVAGE.

Following the delivery of a Dennis 10 cubic yard refuse collection vehicle, the refuse collection scheme decided upon by the Council came into operation in May, when a fortnightly collection of both refuse and salvage was commenced with direct labour, a driver and loader being engaged and a kerbside collection carried out. In four months the volume of refuse had increased by 100% and it was decided to carry out a weekly collection in every parish, but it was found that with only one vehicle and two men it was impossible to collect weekly throughout the district. A weekly collection was instituted, therefore, in every parish, with the exception of Broughton, Bury, Houghton and Wyton, Oldhurst, Wistow and Woodhurst, which continued to have fortnightly collections.

The need for such a service was emphasised by a distinct fall in the number of complaints received regarding the deposit of ashes and tins in roadside ditches and it is anticipated that the service will be still more fully utilised in the future as the amount of refuse collected increased steadily throughout the winter.

The refuse was disposed of at two tips, which are controlled, clean soil being used to cover the refuse.

Salvage was collected at the same time as house refuse, a separate internal division being provided in the collection vehicle for this purpose.

The amounts collected have steadily decreased since the end of the War and the collection is now practically confined to waste paper and cardboard, household bones and textiles.

The salvage is sorted and baled at St. Ives where the scheme for the joint use of premises and labour with the Borough of St. Ives continued to the mutual advantage of each Council.

During the year approximately 25 tons of materials were salvaged and sold at controlled prices for the sum of £180.

The following table shows the weights of the more important materials collected:-

	Tons	Cwts	Qtrs		Tons	Cwts	Qtrs
Scrap Iron	2.	1.	3.	Paper	17.	1.	0.
Bones	2.	16.	3.	Textiles	3.	0.	2.

Total number of Inspections for all purposes 2407

(a) HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

Under Public Health and Housing Acts	795
Reinspections	110
Number of Preliminary Notices Served	64
Number of Preliminary Notices complied with	49
Number of Statutory Notices Served	0
Number of Statutory Notices Complied with	0

The majority of the preliminary notices served were for urgent repairs required to abate nuisances that were dealt with informally under the Public Health Acts. It was not necessary to issue any statutory notices to enforce the execution of the work required.

No action was taken under Section 9 of the Housing Act 1936, as it was considered that the shortage of materials and labour were such that the issue of notices requiring minor repairs to internal plaster work and such other defects as are normally dealt with under that Section was not warranted.

All defects that were likely to endanger the health of the occupants were carried out by the owners after the service of informal notices.

(b) INSPECTIONS UNDER THE FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

Number of Factory Inspections	74
Number of Written Notices Served	2
Number of Occupiers Prosecuted	Nil.

A new store room was provided at one bakehouse after representations had been made to the owner and two Notices were served on the occupiers of other bakehouses regarding the linewashing of their premises.

The number of factories in the district is small and no Notices were served on the occupiers relating to those sections of the Factories Act that are administered by the Council.

(c) INSPECTIONS UNDER REGULATIONS, ETC.

Cowsheds and Dairies	...	94
Butchers Premises	...	142
Slaughterhouses	...	11
Meat from outside District	...	39
Preserved Food	...	120
Offensive Trades	...	15
Shops	...	35
General Public Health Visits	...	132
Schools	...	2
Pumps Wells	...	28
Tents, Vans and Sheds	...	25
Dumps, Tips	...	127
After Infectious Disease	...	18
Drains	...	121
Evacuation	...	72
Salvage	...	189
Petroleum Stores	...	2
Site Inspections	...	27
Miscellaneous	...	67
Refuse Collections	...	121
Camps	...	1
War Damage	...	150
Disinfestations	...	16

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The table gives a general picture of the work of the Department during the year, a total of 1,502 inspections having been carried out under the various Acts and Regulations which the Council are responsible for enforcing.

A number of infringements were found in the course of the inspections which were dealt with by informal action, no cases arose which were considered to be of such a serious character as to warrant prosecution.

The 150 inspections made in respect of War Damage were carried out after the explosion of a flying bomb on the outskirts of Somersham.

At the commencement of the refuse collection service it was found that many people persisted in putting out refuse in containers that were too heavy to lift on to the vehicle in an endeavour to get rid of large accumulations of materials as soon as possible, a number of visits had to be made therefore to ensure the smooth running of the scheme.

Only 18 visits were made in connection with the disinfection of premises after cases of infectious disease which emphasises the low incidence of notifiable diseases in the area during the year.

3.(4) CAMPING SITES.

Three licences were granted during the year for the placing and use of moveable dwellings in the area under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

In each case the licences issued were for a period of one year and the only conditions attached were to ensure that the sanitary conditions of both the dwelling and the site were maintained in a satisfactory condition.

There are no licensed camping sites in the area, but a small number of trailer caravans are stationed for short periods in the parishes adjoining the River Ouse during the summer months.

3.(5) SHOPS AND OFFICES - (6) SMOKE ABATEMENT - (7) SWIMMING BATHS.

There is nothing of interest to report under the above headings.

3.(8) ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

The Housing Survey commenced during the year indicated that the number of houses infested with bed bugs is extremely small, only one new case having been confirmed, and this house was completely cleared before the end of 1945.

Disinfection continues to be carried out in the other cases reported during 1944 but up to the present it has been found impossible to completely clear these houses, which are old thatched cottages subject to Demolition Orders.

Various insecticides were used for disinfection including "Lawvercide", "Mat-a-fly" and "Thermatox" fumigators.

It was not possible to obtain supplies of D.D.T. during the year but these became available in 1946.

The householders concerned have co-operated in every way in an endeavour to eradicate these parasites.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

	<u>Total cases notified.</u>	<u>Admitted to Hospital.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever	6	4	-
Pneumonia	12	-	3
Erysipelas	4	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	4	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Enteric	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	11	-	-
Measles	59	-	-
Jaundice	5	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	-	-

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

During the year 81 children under 5 years, and 1 between 5-15 were immunized by the County Medical Officer of Health's Staff.

In the middle of the year there were 1,791 children under 5, and 1,490 aged 5-14 (inclusive) in the district.

TUBERCULOSIS.

AGE PERIOD			New Cases				Deaths			
			Pulmonary		Non-Pul.		Pulmonary		Non-Pul.	
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0
1
5
10	1	1	...
15
20	2
25	1	1
35
45	1	1
55	1
65 and upwards	1
TOTAL			3	2	0	1	2	1	1	0

THE WATER WORKS

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HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:-

(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	795
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	905
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932.	...	577
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	629
(3)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	96
(4)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	229

2. Remedy of defects during the Year without Service of formal notices:-

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	...	49
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:-

(a)-Proceedings under Sections 9,10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:		
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:		
(a) By owners	...	0
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	...	0
(b)-Proceedings under Public Health Acts:		
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:-		
(a) By owners		0
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners		0
(c)-Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:		
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made		2
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	2
(d)-Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:		
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	0
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	...	0

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Housing Act, 1939 - Part IV. Overcrowding.

(a)-(i)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	...	6
(ii)	Number of families dwelling therein	...	9
(iii)	Number of persons dwelling therein	...	48
(b)-(i)	Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	1
(c)-(i)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	2
(ii)	Number of persons concerned in such cases	...	12
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	...	0

HOUSING (GENERAL).

The Housing programme for the general needs of the district was commenced in 1945. As even the land already owned by the Council for housing purposes had to be approved by numerous Ministries, delay was inevitable.

A preliminary scheme for the erection of 44 houses was approved as follows; Bluntisham 8, Bury 6, Needingworth 10, Somersham 10, Warboys 10. The only houses actually started during the year were those at Warboys, but this preliminary scheme is now well advanced. It was the policy of the Council to press forward with the erection of houses in every parish and sites continued to be acquired for this purpose.

The Council decided that they would concentrate on the erection of permanent houses of the traditional brick type and consequently did not make an application for either permanent or temporary prefabricated houses, or Swedish timber houses.

The main programme consists of 3 and 4 bedroom parlour type houses, but the erection of smaller types such as bungalows for old people is envisaged as the sites are further developed.

The Joint County Committee constituted on the lines suggested in the Hobhouse Report adopted a "standard" of fitness which should be applied to every house and established uniform methods of classification and inspection of all the cottage property in the County.

These suggestions were approved by the Council, and the survey, therefore, is being carried out on this basis.

As the Housing (Rural Workers) Act expired during the year the houses were classified into four categories according to their condition instead of the 5 suggested by the Ministry of Health in Circular 64/44. Somersham and Colne were completed during the year and the survey was being made of Bluntisham-cum-Earith.

The following table indicates the position at the end of the year:-

	No. Inspected	Categories of houses. (the Categories are described below)			
		1.	2.	3.	4.
SOMERSHAM	398	149	93	82	74
COLNE	133	82	20	19	12
EARTH	46	21	7	8	10
TOTAL :	577	252	120	109	96

Category.

Condition of Dwelling.

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Satisfactory in all respects. |
| 2. | Minor defects only. |
| 3. | Requiring repair, structural alteration or improvement. |
| 4. | Unfit for habitation and beyond repair at reasonable expense. |

The Council considered it was most important to utilise all the labour resources available in the area on the construction of new houses in the immediate future, therefore notices requiring the repair of houses found not to be in all respects fit for habitation were limited to urgent matters necessary to prevent serious deterioration of the structure or possible danger to the health of the tenants.

The position with regard to slum clearance and overcrowding remained practically the same. One case of overcrowding that had been outstanding since 1939 was relieved by the family being rehoused in a Council house. Two Demolition Orders were served on a pair of cottages which were demolished after the occupiers had been rehoused by the Council.

When the survey is completed the Council will then be in a position to assess the housing needs of each parish, and draw up a further Slum Clearance programme.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) MILK SUPPLY.

Number of Registered Cowkeepers	96
" " Cowsheds and Dairies	98
" " Registered Retailers	36
" " Visits to Cowsheds and Dairies	94
" " Contraventions found	10
" " Contraventions remedied	8
" " Premises found to require cleansing	9
" " Premises found to require structural alteration	2

Two applications for the registration of new premises for the production of milk for sale by wholesale were received and granted by the Council.

There are 15 accredited producers and 5 attested herds in the area but practically all the "Tuberoulin Tested" milk produced from these latter herds is sold by wholesale and is retailed outside the area.

There is one pasteurising plant in the area and a licence in respect of the plant, authorising the sale of the milk under the special designation "Pasteurised" was renewed at the beginning of the year. The plant is designed for the short-time high temperature process and is automatically controlled.

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Nine samples of milk were taken after pasteurisation and submitted to the Public Analyst for bacteriological examination and the phosphatase test.

Following the introduction of the heat treated milk (Prescribed Tests) Order which was made under Defence Regulation 55G, the County Council as the Food & Drugs Authority co-operated with the Council to avoid duplication of the work. The results of the examination of the samples taken being made available to both Authorities.

The results of the examination indicated that the milk satisfied the prescribed conditions:

One supplementary licence authorising the use of the special designation "Pasteurised" in relation to milk retailed in the area was granted to a firm operating a short time high temperature plant which is licensed in another district. One dealers licence for the sale of "Tuberculin Tested" milk by wholesale was also granted by the Council.

Close co-operation in the administration of the Milk & Dairies Order was maintained during the year with the Hunts. War Agricultural Executive Committee and the County Council. Milk producers were greatly handicapped by the acute shortage of skilled labour but nevertheless the general quality of the milk supply was satisfactory.

(b) MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Number of Licensed Slaughterhouses	11
Number of Butchers Shops	14
Visits to Slaughterhouses	11
Visits to Butchers Shops	142
Total weight of meat condemned and destroyed	504 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

Only the occasional slaughtering of pigs under Ministry of Food permits was carried out at the licensed slaughterhouses as the meat sold in the area is slaughtered at Government controlled slaughterhouses situated outside the district.

The meat condemned as unfit for human consumption was inspected in butchers shops and was subsequently destroyed.

The routine inspection of other foods was carried on and the following were utilised as animal foods or destroyed after being inspected and found to be unfit for human consumption:-

248 tins meat	502 lbs	279 tins milk	260 lbs
71 tins vegetables	71 lbs	14 tins fish	6 lbs
dried fruit	41 lbs	cheese	140 lbs
rice	100 lbs	sugar	46 lbs
flour	168 lbs	wet fish	70 lbs.

The Salvage Department of the Ministry of Food were notified of other articles of food such as bacon and fats which were returned to the manufacturers and dealt with by the Ministry of Food's own organisation.

(c) ADULTERATION.

The County Council administer the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, 1936, relating to the adulteration of food. No special circumstances arose where it was considered that action could be taken by the Council

(d) CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD.

The only food submitted to the Public Analyst (Dr. Greenburgh) for bacteriological examination, was milk.

The results of the examination of the samples showed that they were satisfactory, and have been commented upon under the section of the report dealing with the milk supply.

